Criteria for export of rice

302. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any criterion has been laid down to determine the eligibility for subsidy for export of rice;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how it is ensured that only exports of genuine non-Basmati rice to the Middle East is put in a claim?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) A new foodgrain export policy is being formulated. It is at an advanced stage of consideration in the Government of India. The details and incentives under the scheme are yet to be finalised.

Trade relation with Libya

303. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Libya has offered multi-sectoral scope for the Indian firms;

(b) if so, the sectors which have been thrown open; and

(c) the areas where the Indian firms have already made a foray and the other areas where they now propose to enter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) Indian firms have already made a foray in Libya in infrastructure, power, oil and telecommunications. New sector identified for cooperation with Libya include automobiles, software, IT education, healthcare and pharmaceuticals. Libya has also lifted an informal ban on commodity imports from India, which was in force for the last few years.

Gold Policy

304. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to set up a panel to study the Gold Policy;

(b) whether there are any guidelines for the panel;

(c) by when, the outcome of the study is expected; and

(d) how far it would affect the Gold Industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. A Committee to examine the regulatory structure of the Gold Industry to make India a gold trading hub has been constituted by the Ministry of Commerce.

The Committee has following terms of reference:

(i) Improving the scope of measures to be undertaken to facilitate banks to hedge in Future Markets on Gold.

(ii) Recommend measures to facilitate Mutual Funds to invest in gold

(iii) Recommend measures to improve the ability of the banks to implement Gold-Linked Saving Scheme.

(iv) Recommend appropriate customs and foreign trade measures that are required to be undertaken to facilitate manufacturing and trading in gold.

(v) Any other recommendation required to be made to improve trading in gold and also on measures required to ensure quality of the goods being traded.

The Committee is expected to submit its report within six weeks from the date of its first meeting. The findings of the Committee are expected to improve the prospects of Gold Trade in the country.

Growth of cement industry

305. SHRI M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the growth of cement industry is very modest during the current year as compared to the previous years;

(b) if so, the details of the growth rate of cement industry during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise;

(c) whether Government have estimated the demand and supply of cement in the country;

(d) [illegible]